

## Chapter 9

### Foster Care Compensation

*“You were asking about a FC pay list, that's the foster care pay list, and that is how they determine what rate the child, you know, you get paid for. And my children, I had three . . . during the time that Boys and Girls was the lead agency, and all of a sudden my payments were reduced 56 percent per child during a month. The FC pay list had been completed without any of my information, without any of my input. I asked for those to be redone and they were never redone. But I went from \$30 a child to \$12 a child. All three of them were in diapers and one on formula, so there's many, many expenses that I had to provide for those children.”*

*~ Foster parent*

November 30, 2011

Senator Kathy Campbell  
District 25 State Capitol  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Senator Campbell:

Bryson Bartels shared with me the November 10<sup>th</sup> email note that Michelle Chafee sent to him regarding information you wanted pertaining to foster care parenting. I'll highlight each of the items requested followed by the information in response:

**Current compensation guidelines for foster parents; how it is determined, etc. ; the expectations of foster parents, including training, transportation (including if additional compensation), visitation supervision (including if compensation), etc. ; provisions for foster children regarding funds for clothing, athletic participation, music lessons;**

Your questions regarding compensation guidelines for foster parents, expectations of foster parents, and provisions for funds regarding other incidental costs were recently addressed in a letter to Senator Dubas. I have attached the letter, with the enclosed attachments for your review. If you have additional questions regarding these matters please feel free to contact me.

**Supervision guidelines for foster parents for example: can foster children participate in car pools (to school, to out of town games, etc.), have babysitters, go to sleepovers, own a car, have a job, go with other parents/kids to movies, etc.**

DHHS expects foster parents to provide supervision to children in their care and use their good judgment to make decisions involved with the daily care of the child, based on the individual child's needs, behaviors, etc., DHHS policies, guidelines, and licensing requirements.

Therefore, as a general statement, foster parents could allow a child to participate in the types of recreational activities that other children would be doing, and could participate in car pools. DHHS also addresses the fact that some decisions have cultural and religious implications, for example, dating or cutting the child's hair. DHHS regulations state the Department will attempt to involve the parent in those types of decisions and potentially will involve the Guardian Ad Litem. Regulations regarding decisions involved with daily care of the child are found in 390 NAC 11-001.

DHHS also has specific regulations regarding what are considered to be "specific sensitive issues" such as a youth owning a car, having a driver's license, employment, hunting, and others. The regulations that address these specific issues and provide guidance on who can make decisions and the basis for decisions are found in 390 NAC 11-002.

**What are the guidelines for the number of children a foster family can have?**

Licensing regulations state that care provided at any time is limited to no more than nine children under the age of majority, including children related to the foster parents by blood or adoption. No more than 6 of these children may be age 12 or younger. The maximum also

includes any adults for whom care is provided. (Found at 474 NAC 6-003.26A) Licensing regulations also state that for every six children in the home, there must reside at least one adult responsible for their care and supervision. An exemption allowing more than six children can be granted to eliminate the need to move children, but only when a foster parent dies and the surviving spouse continues to care for the same children, or the foster parents divorce, or one of the foster parents is absent for an extended period of time due to active military duty or illness. A child with sufficient maturity may be left temporarily without direct supervision, at the adult's discretion (474 NAC 6-003.26A1).

DHHS also allows placement of children in approved homes when the child and foster parent are relatives or the child and foster parents were previously known to each other (for example, the latter might be a friend of the family, a neighbor, or a teacher). Although there are no specific guidelines regarding the number of children in an approved home, the number is controlled by the fact that if the foster parent provides care to children from more than one family, state statute requires licensure, and licensing regulations are applied.

**What "rights" do foster parents have in regard to input into the foster child's placement, treatment, providing information to the court?**

There are no specific "rights" defined for foster parents in a legal sense. Foster parents have the opportunity for input on a child's placement or treatment because of their knowledge about the child and his or her daily life. However, they do not have the "right" to make decisions about placement and treatment.

DHHS requires that the case manager or a staff person specified by the case manager and knowledgeable about the child, meet monthly with the caregiver. These visits provide an opportunity for the caregiver to voice any concerns they have, ask for additional support services, or ask questions they have in regards to the care for the child.

Encouragement is also given to include foster parents in family team meetings during which case plans are developed and progress is reviewed. Because the child's parent(s) determine who will be included as a member of the team, the parent(s) can choose not to include the foster parent, or can choose to have the foster parent present for a portion of the family team meeting.

The Foster Care Review Board also includes foster parents in their regular review of cases, by providing the opportunity for written or verbal input or for actual attendance at a meeting.

Provision of Information to the Court: NE statute, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 43-1314.02 (2007 Neb. Laws, L.B. 457, § 1) requires courts to provide a Caregiver Information Form to foster parents. They can submit written information to the court and can be heard at review and permanency hearings. This *optional* form may assist foster parents in providing written information to the court. Foster parents can submit the written form to the Clerk of the Court. If the foster parent so chooses, s/he can be present at the hearing and present information. The form is found at <http://www.supremecourt.ne.gov/forms/juvenile/JC-caregiver-form.pdf>.

**How many foster parent and what type do you currently have? How many are direct employees of DHHS/KVC/NFC; how many are contracted through subcontractors? Are there plans to expand foster homes; how-subcontract, direct service?**

There are 1,612 licensed foster homes and 1,800 approved foster homes. These homes are supported and paid by different agencies including DHHS, Lead Contractors, and Subcontractors. There are ongoing recruitment and retention activities occurring statewide. The Department contracts with Child Placing Agencies, Lead Contractors, and Adoption Providers who are responsible for the individualized recruitment of homes that will be supported by a continuum of services for children, families and foster families to meet the needs of highly specialized youth (DD and Treatment, older youth, youth with diverse cultural needs). The

Department's Children and Family Services Plan continues to include a statewide public information campaign.

Currently, although we have not tracked the information, we estimate that less than five employees from the Children and Family Services Division of DHHS, KVC, and NFC are providing foster care for children in the Department's custody. DHHS regulations found at 390 NAC 1-004.06 indicate employees in the Children and Family Services Division will not serve as foster parents unless the child is related to the employee. However, policy variances have been granted by the Division Director to allow an employee to provide foster care for a specific child.

During this next year DHHS will continue to contract with the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association who fields all calls to the foster parent inquiry line. When a person calls the inquiry line they are sent a packet regarding foster parenting in Nebraska. The Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association also makes follow up calls to the inquiries and sends a monthly report to DHHS. In 2009 the foster parent inquiry line received approximately 62 calls per month. In 2010 the foster parent inquiry line received approximately 92 calls per month. The data for January, 2011 through June, 2011 shows an increase to approximately 145 calls per month. In addition, recruitment efforts will include delivering bookmarks, note pads, magnets, flyers, and other printed materials to local merchants throughout the state to hand out to patrons. These materials will have the foster parent inquiry line printed on them.

We also are pleased to have a long standing relationship with the Nebraska Broadcasters Association and plan to continue foster parent recruitment ads during this next calendar year. The ads are aired during prime time and represent a commitment of the Association members in this and other

I hope that this information answers your questions. If you need additional information or have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scot L. Adams", is written over a horizontal line.

Scot L. Adams, Ph. D.  
Interim Director  
Division of Children and Family Services  
Department of Health and Human Services

November 30, 2011

Senator Dubas  
District 34  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Senator Dubas:

Thank you for your letter dated October 13, 2011 regarding the methodologies DHHS and its contractors use to determine the rates of payment to foster parents and the current rates for foster parents.

Foster homes across the State are divided into certain categories. These categories are:

Traditional Foster homes: Foster homes (licensed and kinship) supported and paid directly by DHHS.

Agency Supported Foster Care: Licensed foster homes supported and paid directly by an agency which has a direct contract with DHHS.

Agency Supported Foster Care for Lead Contractors: Licensed foster homes supported and paid directly by an agency which has a direct contract with the Nebraska Families Collaborative (NFC) or KVC Health Systems (KVC). These agencies are referred to as subcontractors of the DHHS contracts with NFC and KVC.

Foster Homes for KVC and NFC: Foster homes (licensed or kinship) supported and paid directly by KVC or NFC.

DHHS, Lead Contractors, and Subcontractors all pay foster parents different amounts using individual methodologies. Each question you posed is addressed with the answer following in Attachment A. Attachments B-F includes supplemental information to all five questions. Please note the response to each question includes a summary of information from DHHS, Lead Agencies and Subcontractors.

DHHS has been asked not to release the specific rates of subcontractors. DHHS believes it is important to specify the rates directly paid to foster parents, therefore, the subcontracting agencies will be identified only by a letter e.g. Agency A. The letters designated for each subcontractor coincides with the information provided in each attachment, e.g. Agency A is the same agency in any reference within the attached documents. Please note not all subcontractor agencies are listed within each attachment, as the information provided is specific to the question asked.

The following is a list of agencies having contracts with DHHS, KVC, and NFC.

DHHS: Building Blocks, Behavioral Health, NOVA, Boys Town, Christian Heritage, COMPASS, Epworth Village, Mid-Plains Center, Nebraska Children's Home, Omni Behavioral Health, South Central Behavioral Services.

KVC: Apex, Boys Town, Cedars, Child Saving Institute; Christian Heritage, Cornerstone, Epworth Village, Lutheran Family Services, Nebraska Children's Home, NOVA, Omni Behavioral Health.

NFC: Child Saving Institute, Boys Town, Omni Behavioral Health, Child Connect, Apex, Nebraska Children's Home, Christian Heritage, Lutheran Family Services, NOVA, KVC.

I hope this information provides you a better understanding of the methodologies used to determine foster care rates, and provides you information regarding the rate structure used by DHHS, KVC, NFC, and Subcontractors statewide.

If you have any questions or need additional information please feel free to contact me.



Kerry T. Winterer  
Chief Executive Officer  
Department of Health and Human Services

(Enclosures): Attachment A	Answers to Questions 1-5
Attachment B	Supplemental information Question 1
Attachment C	Supplemental information Question 2
Attachment D	Supplemental information Question 3
Attachment E	Supplemental information Question 4
Attachment F	Supplemental information Question 5

Attachment A

**Question 1: What methodology, if any, does the Department currently utilize to determine the rate of payment for:**

- a. The cost of food for foster children in Nebraska**
- b. The cost of daily supervision for foster children in Nebraska**
- c. The rate of payment for the cost of school supplies for foster children in Nebraska**
- d. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for home visitation for foster children in Nebraska**
- e. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for the child to remain in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement**
- f. The cost of personal incidentals for foster children in Nebraska, and**
- g. Liability insurance for foster children in Nebraska**

**DHHS:**

- a. Cost of food:** the monthly rate includes providing food for the child. The cost of food is not itemized within the rate.
- b. Cost of daily supervision:** the monthly rate includes the expectation for daily supervision. The cost of daily supervision is not itemized within the per diem rate.
- c. Cost of school supplies:** the monthly rate includes the expectation for providing school supplies. The cost of school supplies is not itemized within the per diem rate.
- d. Cost of travel expenses for home visitation:** The first 100 miles of transportation for the foster child are considered to be included in the foster care payment schedule. If the foster parent documents additional transportation, the foster parent can be reimbursed at the rate of \$11 for each additional 50 miles in a month. The cost of transportation includes any transportation provided by the foster parent for visits with parents or siblings or for transportation to school.
- e. Cost of travel expenses for school enrollment:** The first 100 miles of transportation for the foster child are considered to be included in the foster care payment schedule. If the foster parent documents additional transportation, the foster parent can be reimbursed at the rate of \$11 for each additional 50 miles in a month. The cost of transportation includes any transportation provided by the foster parent for visits with parents or siblings or for transportation to school.
- f. The cost of personal incidentals for foster children:** the monthly rate includes the cost of personal incidentals for the foster child. The cost of personal incidentals is not itemized within the per diem rate.
- g. Liability Insurance:** Liability insurance is not considered as a cost within the foster care payment. However, it is important to note that foster parents are not required to purchase their own foster parent insurance. DHHS participates in the State's self-insurance pool, in keeping with NE Rev. Statute, at 43-1320.

**For additional information regarding DHHS methodology regarding foster care rates please see Attachment B.**

**Question 2: What methodology, if any, do each of the Lead Agencies under the “Families Matter” reform currently utilize to determine the rate of payment for:**

- a. The cost of food for foster children in Nebraska**
- b. The cost of daily supervision for foster children in Nebraska**
- c. The rate of payment for the cost of school supplies for foster children in Nebraska**
- d. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for home visitation for foster children in Nebraska**
- e. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for the child to remain in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement**
- f. The cost of personal incidentals for foster children in Nebraska, and**
- g. Liability insurance for foster children in Nebraska**

**KVC:**

- a. Cost of food:** consists of food and nonalcoholic beverages purchased at grocery, convenience, and specialty stores; dining at restaurants; and household expenditures on school meals. For the median age of 13, this expense is \$2488 annually.
- b. Cost of daily supervision:** this is an inclusive service provided in the per diem rate.
- c. Cost of school supplies:** consists of day care tuition and supplies; baby-sitting; and elementary and high school tuition, books, fees, and supplies. Books, fees, and supplies may be for private or public schools. The average child care and education expenses used in the USDA calculator are based on families who have these expenses. USDA states if you do not have these expenses, expenditures on a child should be adjusted to account for this. For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1213 annually. Child care is paid for through other DHHS programs. Therefore, \$350 is allowed for supplies.
- d. Cost of travel expenses for home visitation:** consists of the monthly payments on vehicle loans, down payments, gasoline and motor oil, maintenance and repairs, insurance, and public transportation (including airline fares). For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1600 annually.
- e. Cost of travel expenses for school enrollment:** consists of the monthly payments on vehicle loans, down payments, gasoline and motor oil, maintenance and repairs, insurance, and public transportation (including airline fares). For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1600 annually.
- f. The cost of personal incidentals for foster children:** consists of personal care items (haircuts, toothbrushes, etc.), entertainment (portable media players, sports equipment, televisions, computers, etc.), and reading materials (non-school books, magazines, etc.). For the median age of 13, this expense is \$950 annually.
- g. Liability Insurance:** provided by DHHS.

**For additional information regarding KVC’s methodology regarding foster care rates please see Attachment C.**

## **Nebraska Families Collaborative (NFC):**

- a. Cost of food: The Nebraska Families Collaborative's (NFC's) rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the U.S. Department of Agriculture "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at the time of rate structure development). The rate paid to subcontractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child.
- b. Cost of daily supervision: Child care costs are excluded as they are provided by other State departments. Payments for planned respite are provided to foster parents paid directly by the NFC, and crisis respite is available as needed.
- c. Cost of school supplies: The NFC's rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the USDA's "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at time of rate structure development). The rate paid to contractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child.

The NFC is also contracting with the Foster Care Closet located in Lincoln to help supply our foster parents with the additional items that they may need for their foster child during the school year. At this time they have been able to provide, new and used clothing, underwear and diapers, socks and shoes, book bags, pencils, erasers, deodorant, Halloween costumes, and many other items that are donated. These items are on a first come first serve basis, but can also be requested for specific sizes and items.

- d. Cost of travel expenses for home visitation: The NFC's rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the USDA's "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at time of rate structure development). The rate paid to subcontractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child.

Supplemental pay is available for foster parents at the rate of \$15/hour if they provide supervised visitation services in excess of four hours which is contractually required of each foster parent. In addition, the NFC provides transportation through commercial carriers, gas vouchers, and bus passes as needed.

Please refer to the attached documents titled Standard Expectations of Foster Parents and Parenting Time for Foster Parents for additional information.

- e. Cost of travel expenses for school enrollment: The NFC's rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the USDA's "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at time of rate structure development). The rate paid to contractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child.

In addition, the NFC provides transportation through commercial carriers, gas vouchers, and bus passes as needed. The NFC requires each foster parent to provide or arrange appropriate transportation to activities and community services, therapy visits, doctor appointments, court hearings, legal appointments,

family visits and to school. The NFC will offer a transportation stipend of \$10.00 for travel for appointments and maintenance of school outside the radius of 30 miles for the youth at no additional cost to the provider. The provider will offer transportation within the thirty miles radius for the youth at no additional cost to the NFC.

Please refer to the attached document titled Standard Expectations of Foster Parents for additional information.

- f. Cost of personal incidentals for foster children: The NFC's rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the USDA's "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at time of rate structure development). The rate paid to contractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child. The NFC also provides petty cash, Wal-Mart vouchers, or purchases items for children as needed.

The NFC is also contracting with the Foster Care Closet located in Lincoln to help supply our foster parents with the additional items that they may need for their foster child during the school year. At this time they have been able to provide, both new and used clothing, underwear and diapers, socks and shoes, book bags, pencils, erasers, deodorant, Halloween costumes, and many other items that were donated. These items are on a first come first serve basis, but can also be requested for specific sizes and items.

- g. Liability Insurance: provided by DHHS.

**Question 3: What methodology, if any, do each of the subcontractors for the lead agencies under the “Families Matter” reform currently utilize to determine the rate of payment for:**

- a. The cost of food for foster children in Nebraska***
- b. The cost of daily supervision for foster children in Nebraska***
- c. The rate of payment for the cost of school supplies for foster children in Nebraska***
- d. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for home visitation for foster children in Nebraska***
- e. The cost of reasonable travel expenses for the child to remain in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement***
- f. The cost of personal incidentals for foster children in Nebraska, and***
- g. Liability insurance for foster children in Nebraska***

**Subcontractors:**

- a. Cost of food:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including cost of food.
- b. Cost of daily supervision:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including cost of daily supervision.
- c. Cost of school supplies:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including cost of school supplies.
- d. Cost of travel expenses for home visitation:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including the cost of travel expenses for home visitation.
- e. Cost of travel expenses for school enrollment:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including the cost of travel expenses for school enrollment.
- f. Cost of personal incidentals for foster children:** The subcontractors take a portion of the rate received from the lead agencies and provide that payment to the foster parents. These payments are all inclusive for the needs of the child including the cost of personal incidentals for foster children.
- g. Liability Insurance:** provided by DHHS.

**For additional information regarding the subcontracting agencies for the Lead Contractors please see Attachment D.**

**Question 4: What process, if any, exists by which the Department, lead agencies and subcontracting agencies take into account the individual needs of the child with respect to determining payments for foster parents?**

**DHHS:**

Rate of payment to foster parents is determined through use of the Foster Care Payment (FCPay) Checklist. Each question or item on the checklist deals with a need or behavior of the child that is likely to require something from the foster parent that would be above and beyond what a caregiver usually would do or provide for a child of that age. Each item also has a certain number of points associated with it. The checklist is intended to be completed by a worker, with the foster parent. When it is completed, the number of points is added. That number of points, in combination with the child's age, determines the monthly payment rate.

**KVC:**

In instances where it has been determined that children need foster care, KVC strives for the least restrictive setting possible for their care. It is preferred, for example, that children live close to their home community and with relative caregivers whenever possible. Meeting the child's needs by minimizing disruption and trauma while offering appropriate help and service is the goal of Family Permanency Specialists, foster parents and service providers.

All children placed in foster homes are assigned a Level of Care (LOC) ranging from Family Level of care to Enhanced Specialized Level of Care based on their individual needs reflected in the Child Needs Assessment (CNA).

**NFC:**

Children are assessed at placement and on an ongoing basis, at least every six months, but more often if needed, to determine the intensity of care needed for each child, and the child's level of foster care pay is determined by assessed needs. Supplemental pay for each level was calculated using a factor based on the highest level of care for each category.

**For additional information regarding KVC's process for determining rates of payment using individual needs of the child please see Attachment E.**

**Question 5: What are the rates currently paid by the Department, the lead agencies, and each of the subcontracting agencies to foster parents?**

DHHS, Lead Contractors, and Subcontractors all have different rates of payment to foster parents based on which agency is supporting and directly paying the foster parent. The rate is also based on the individual needs of the child placed with the foster parents using the assessments previously outlined.

**Attachment F** provides detailed rate tables for DHHS, Lead Contractors, and Subcontractors. The attachment includes the rate DHHS pays foster homes they support and directly pay, and the rate DHHS pays directly to its contractors. The attachment also includes the rate Lead Contractors pay foster homes they support and directly pay, and the rate Lead Contractors pay directly to their subcontractors. The attachment also includes the rates paid by the subcontractors directly to foster parents.

## Attachment B

### Supplemental Information regarding Question #1:

The rate of payment to foster parents is determined through use of the Foster Care Payment (FCPay) Checklist. Each question or item on the checklist deals with a need or behavior of the child that is likely to require something from the foster parent that would be above and beyond what a caregiver usually would do or provide for a child of that age. Each item also has a certain number of points associated with it. The checklist is intended to be completed by a worker, with the foster parent. When it is completed, the number of points is added. That number of points, in combination with the child's age, determines the monthly payment rate. Depending on age and needs of the child, the payment to the foster parent can range from \$246/month for a child ages 0-5 with no special needs up to a maximum of \$1,324 for a very high needs child who is age 12 through 18.

The maintenance payment covers the usual costs of maintaining a child. The specific costs are not broken out in the rate except for transportation. The costs include but are not limited to:

- Board and room;
- Personal needs, including recreation and extracurricular activities;
- School needs, including such things as school supplies, school trips, and graduation expenses;
- Transportation up to 100 miles or \$21 in a month;
- Clothing; and
- Allowance.

In addition to the payment determined by the checklist and payment scale, DHHS has a number of potential add-ons. Examples are provided below.

- Although the foster parent is expected to provide clothing from the foster care payment, if the child comes to the foster home with inadequate clothing, or there are special circumstances such as a sudden weight gain or loss, the worker can authorize additional purchases. Generally, these payments are made directly to the store.
- When the foster parent needs child care for the foster child due to employment or school, DHHS can pay for the child care. Purposes for the child care (e.g., foster parents work outside of the home or are in school), rate of payment, and parameters, such as number of allowable hours in a week or month, are those established by the Child Care Subsidy Program. Payment is made directly to the provider.
- An amount for respite can be added into the maintenance payment, if a foster parent is using respite. The maximum amount is determined by points on the FCPay checklist, and the child's age. (The amounts can be found on the attachment with FCPay rates.)

The FCPay checklist methodology has been used for DHHS for traditional foster homes since 1994. It was developed by a team composed of DHHS staff and foster parents who cared for children with a variety and range of needs. In 1998 another team, again composed of DHHS staff and foster parents, reviewed the tool and made minor adjustments to the scale, with the parameter that whatever was decided, the results had

to be budget-neutral for the Department. The parameters established in 1994 and carried through in 1998 are:

- The basic (lowest) rate for any child would not be more than the ADC rate for one person, which at that time was \$222. If the goal of choice for any child is to have him or her remain at home or return home, it would not be logical to pay someone else more to care for the child than we would provide to a parent who was dependent on ADC.
- Payment rate would increase based on the child's needs. One way to determine needs would be the FCPay checklist, and the other would be age.

The rate schedule has increased slightly over the years, due to budget increases provided to DHHS for a small percentage increase in payments to providers. The basic foster care rate now is \$246 (See Attachment A).

<b>FCPAY Rates - Effective July 1, 2010</b>				
<b>Points</b>	<b>0-27</b>			
Age 0-5	\$246			
6-11	\$323			
12+	\$388			
Respite	+\$45			
<b>Points</b>	<b>28-34</b>	<b>35-41</b>		
Age 0-5	\$300	\$356		
6-11	\$378	\$432		
12+	\$444	\$498		
Respite	+\$111			
<b>Points</b>	<b>42-46</b>	<b>47-51</b>	<b>52-56</b>	<b>57-61</b>
Age 0-5	\$411	\$466	\$522	\$576
6-11	\$487	\$543	\$599	\$654
12+	\$554	\$609	\$665	\$721
Respite	+\$176			
<b>Points</b>	<b>62-66</b>	<b>67-71</b>	<b>72-75</b>	<b>76-79</b>
Age 0-5	\$631	\$686	\$742	\$809
6-11	\$709	\$764	\$819	\$885
12+	\$775	\$830	\$885	\$952
Respite	+\$176			
<b>Points</b>	<b>80-83</b>	<b>84-86</b>	<b>87-88</b>	<b>89 or more</b>
Age 0-5	\$885	\$974	\$1,073	\$1,181
6-11	\$963	\$1,050	\$1,151	\$1,259
12+	\$1,029	\$1,117	\$1,216	\$1,324
Respite	+\$176			

## Attachment C

Supplemental Information for Question 2 (KVC):

### KVC:

KVC has determined foster parent rates by utilizing information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The methodology used was to take the median age of foster child living in a foster home in the Midwest, determine the amount the USDA states it takes to raise a child, and use that as the median for determine base foster parent rates. The median age of a foster child residing in a foster home is 13 and the USDA states the cost is \$11,888 annually. However, due to various programs through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that provides additional financial support outside a daily rate paid, adjustments to the USDA rate has been accounted for. The USDA reports the following are considered when calculating the average cost to raise a child. These amounts have been adjusted accordingly to reflect financial support from other government or KVC programs:

Housing expenses consist of shelter (mortgage payments, property taxes, or rent; maintenance and repairs; and insurance), utilities (gas, electricity, fuel, cell/telephone, and water), and house furnishings and equipment (furniture, floor coverings, major appliances, and small appliances). For the median age of 13, this expense is \$3563 annually. However, it is the expectation that anyone interested in becoming a foster parent know and understand that they must have basic shelter for the child. The methodology allows for \$1600 annually towards other housing expenses outlined above.

Clothing expenses consist of children's apparel such as diapers, shirts, pants, dresses, and suits; footwear; and clothing services such as dry cleaning, alterations, and repair. For the median age of 13, this expense is \$825 annually. However, KVC has a contract with the Foster Care Closet to provide brand new clothing to each child in care twice a year. This reduces the amount included in the methodology to \$200 annually.

Health care expenses consist of medical and dental services not covered by insurance, prescription drugs and medical supplies not covered by insurance, and health insurance premiums not paid by an employer or other organization. Medical services include those related to physical and mental health. For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1250 annually. However, DHHS provides for 100% of all health care expenses through Medicaid. This amount was removed from the foster parent rate methodology as a result.

### Summary of expenses for base rate annually:

Housing =	\$1600
Food =	\$2488
Transportation =	\$1600
Clothing =	\$ 200 (clothing provided by KVC)
Healthcare =	\$ 0 (paid for by DHHS)

Child Care & Education = \$ 350 (adjusted due to DHHS daycare stipend)  
Miscellaneous = \$ 950  
Total = \$7188 (base rate for foster parents)

As a result, KVC based rates to subcontractors on the estimation that a minimum of \$20 per day would be paid directly to the foster parent and as the needs of the child increased, the foster parent would be reimbursed at a higher rate. KVC made estimations that subcontractors would reimburse foster families at \$30/day for Specialized and \$40/day for Enhanced Specialized. The rates below are what KVC pays subcontractors allowing for an administrative fee on top of the rate to the foster parents for the subcontractor to support the home. The following are the rates that KVC pays to subcontractors:

- A. Family Level of Care – \$31.00 per day
- B. Specialized Level of Care – \$50.00 per day
- C. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care - \$69.00 per day

At these rates and paying foster parents \$20/day, \$30/day, \$40/day respectively for each type of care, the subcontractor would maintain an administrative fee of 30% for Family Level, 40% administrative fee for Specialized, and a 43% administrative fee for Enhanced Specialized level of care. The administrative fee allows for supervision of the home, recruitment, and support.

## Attachment D

Supplemental information regarding Question #3:

### **Agency B: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency B's methodology in determining the rate of pay to foster parents takes into consideration all operational expenses. Agency B researches data provided by the USDA on the average cost of raising a child and uses this information to determine the reimbursement rate paid to foster parents.

Based on the information collected Agency B has determined the following costs to be considered:

Average cost of food	\$5.84 per child
Average cost of daily supervision	\$4.00 per child
Average transportation expenses	\$3.98 per child
Average school supplies and incidentals	\$3.08 per child

In addition Agency B supplements the foster parents with donations (clothing, holiday gifts and parties, school supplies, etc.). The foster care specialists also support the parents with supervision & transportation when applicable.

Agency B reviews annually the rate paid to foster parents and adjust based on current cost of living data and operational expenses.

### **Agency C: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

The methodology used by Agency C to determine the rates paid to foster parents is based on our analysis of the market. Agency C wants to attract and maintain the best and most qualified foster parents for the children in our care. Agency C provides a competitive rate directly to foster parents to compensate them for the hard work they do.

Agency C provides program oversight of foster family services which includes: recruitment of qualified foster parents; initial and ongoing training; retention and ongoing support to maintain youth placement and stability; and ongoing support to foster parents to maintain their critical work with foster children

Agency C sets rates at a level that will attract the most qualified foster parents in a competitive environment. The payment received from lead agencies and the department varies and is less than foster payments and other direct costs combined. The foster care program is subsidized to offset the difference in payments to direct costs.

The items below are not factored directly in the payment methodology but are additional supports provided directly by Agency C and include: Food; Daily supervision; School supplies; Travel expenses; Reasonable travel expenses for the child to remain in school; Personal Incidentals; and Liability Insurance-not covered by Agency C. Agency C foster parents are required to maintain their own insurance.

Stipends, gas cards, grocery cards, diapers and formulas are all additional supports that Agency C is able to offer foster parents. Agency C also maintains a foster care closet that foster families are able to access for additional supplies and incidentals (clothing,

car seats, cribs, backpacks, etc) to support and maintain youth with specific needs or needs above what a foster parent is able to provide.

Agency C utilizes its own assessments to determine the individual needs of foster children and through foster home selection identifies the most appropriate home that is able to offer the necessary supports to those children. Within 24 hours of admission a comprehensive assessment that determines medical, mental health, safety and personal needs of the child is conducted and the results are shared with the lead agency.

Agency C provides supervision and oversight to the foster parents and collaborates with schools, daycares, medical and mental health providers and the contractors to ensure the child, their family and the foster parents receive the support and services they need.

When determining individual needs of the child and the corresponding payment Agency C advocates for foster parents and provides supporting documentation and works with the contractor on determining the rate of reimbursement.

Our daily foster parent rates are as follows:

Intensive/Agency/Enhanced	\$32
Moderate/Continuity/Specialized/Emergency	\$25
Minimal/Pre-Assessment/Respite	\$20
Basic/Traditional/Family	\$15

**Agency D: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency M, Agency F and Agency P along with Agency D all agreed to reimburse \$31, \$22, and \$12. This was done so agencies were not competing with families based on rates of reimbursement. This allowed families to align themselves with an agency they felt comfortable with.

Agency D does not have a specific methodology to determine reimbursement rates to foster families. Agency D reimburses families 44-50% of the contracted rate received from DHHS. This rate fluctuates due to slight differences in the contracted rates with KVC, NFC and DHHS.

**Agency F: (sub-contracts with KVC)**

Agency F determines foster care rates based on what was agreed upon prior to the reform by subcontracting agencies in SESA and the proposed amounts from the lead agencies (at the time) for each level. The following determinations were used to help determine the rates:

- 1) The previous FC payment determination tool and those rates reimbursed at the time by DHHS;
- 2) The previous DHHS level system of agency, continuity, and traditional and the corresponding amounts reimbursed to agency supported foster homes;
- 3) There was also a cost percentage that was looked at in determining the rates (At the time agency supported placements were being paid \$69/day to the FC agency and approximately 45% of that rate would go to the foster family).

**Agency H: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency H does not have a “formula” to determine foster care payment based on the factors outlined in the letter. Agency H determines payment based not only on basic care needs for typical children, but on the care needs specific to the individual child. Agency H respects that children with higher care needs resulting in higher reimbursement rates are children with needs that are beyond what an average or typical child requires.

Agency H also takes into account contracted rates for services as outlined by the Lead Agencies. As a subcontractor, Agency H relies on the assessment tools of the Lead Agencies which outline reimbursement to Agency H. Once the reimbursement amount is determined based on the Lead Agency’s assessment tool, Agency H assigns the level of reimbursement to foster parents based on the Agency H identified reimbursement structure.

**Agency I: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency I did not address the costs of caring for foster youth in the methodology to determine the rate of pay provided to foster parents. The rates are set by DHHS, KVC, and NFC, which is what the subcontractors have to work with for foster parent stipends. Agency I was not involved in the setting of the rates, they were provided by the Lead Agencies.

Agency I provides different rates for the individual needs of foster youth. This is based on the evaluations completed by the Lead Agencies with input from Agency I staff and foster parents. This would indicate the different levels of pay determined by the needs of the individual foster youth both behaviorally, emotionally, medically, and for mental health issues. This includes different requirements by foster parents regarding supervision, transportation, and involvement in the care of the youth. The foster parents received a larger stipend as those needs increase, as does the agency that is required to provide more supportive services.

The supportive services provided by Agency I include recruitment, licensing, pre-service training, and home studies initially. Once placements are made Agency I staff is available 24/7 for crisis situations, as well as consistent and frequent contact with foster families and youth. Agency I develops goals for the youth in foster care in regards to their behavior and supervision plans. Agency I also provides ongoing training, activities, holiday gift certificates, and rewards to foster parents.

**Agency L: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

- Basic Level: Currently, 6 children are placed at this level of care. Foster parents receive a stipend of \$400.00 a month for a child placed at this level of care.
- Minimal Level: Currently, 1 child is placed at this level of care. Foster parents receive a stipend of \$500.00 a month for a child placed at this level of care.
- Moderate Level: Currently, 29 children are placed at this level of care. Foster parents receive a stipend of \$700.00 a month for a child placed at this level of care.

- Intensive Level: Currently, 29 children are placed at this level of care. Foster parents receive a stipend of \$1000.00 a month for a child placed at this level of care.
- Pre-Assessment Level: Currently, 11 children are placed at this level of care.

Foster parents receive \$20.00 per diem for children during the pre-assessment 10day period. There were 9 children placed at the traditional level of care with NDHHS that transitioned on October 15. Foster parents receive a stipend of \$450.00 a month until NFC rescores these youth on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Agency M: (sub-contracts with KVC)**

Our methodology for foster care rate setting reflected an attempt to map or connect to the Foster Care Pay Scale (often referred to as FC Pay) that was in use at the time the reform began, rather than determining costs as outlined above. The FC Pay Scale was developed by DHHS and used for many years by foster homes. Agency M was attempting to provide a smooth transition to kinship and child specific families, as their pay would have been determined from FC Pay scale under DHHS.

Agency M does not use a methodology incorporating the specific items listed in the Senator’s letter. Each rate of payment to foster parent is individualized based on the child’s over-all needs for care. The items in the questions above are taken into account for each child and inclusive of the rate of payment.

Variances in rates to foster homes per child are related to the child’s history and current behavioral, mental and physical health and cultural considerations. Children with higher needs in these areas are approved at a higher rate of payment to the foster care agency, which in turn, provides a higher rate of payment to the foster home.

**Agency N: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency N has established foster care reimbursement levels to be competitive in the current market and to be as comparable as possible with former levels in order to promote foster parent recruitment and retention. The costs as detailed in question 3 of Senator Dubas’s letter have not been formally evaluated, although these areas are addressed with foster parents by CSI foster care staff on an ongoing basis. There is difficulty in accurately measuring costs is the wide range of expenditures related to food, daily supervision, travel, etc based on the needs of each individual child.

**Agency O: (sub-contracts with KVC)**

Agency O does not utilize an independent methodology in determining payments to licensed foster families. As a subcontractor of KVC, Agency O determines the level of need for each child based upon the Child Needs Assessment completed by KVC, prior to, and during the placement of a child in a foster home. In consideration of foster family payments, Agency O follows the KVC payment structure and rate schedule for KVC foster families.

**Agency P: (sub-contracts with KVC and NFC)**

Agency P does not have a methodology to determine costs for any items on Question 4 because Agency P assumes these costs are taken into consideration when determining what rate will be paid to the Foster Care agencies by the Lead Agencies. The method for determining individual payments to the foster parents are based on the youth's assessment which takes into consideration the individual needs of a child and is completed cooperatively by Agency P and the Lead Agency. Agency P also takes extensive travel by a foster parent into consideration when a family is driving a youth long distances to their home school and can provide additional reimbursement to the family. At this time, Agency P is doing this for one family.

**KVC (subcontracts with NFC)**

**See answer to Question #2 in regards to KVC's methodology.**

## Attachment E

Supplemental information regarding KVC for question #4:

KVC Behavioral HealthCare Nebraska provides and subcontracts for, three distinct levels of care (LOC), which accommodate families at various levels of training and youth among a spectrum of needs.

The following levels of care designations are used to determine the reimbursement rate to be paid to the foster parent or contracting Child Placing Agency:

**A. Family Level of Care** – Basic care; minimal needs. This level is for children who have minimal needs and require the type of care offered in a Family Foster Home. Children who score at the Family Level of Care may have occasional episodes of behavioral and/or emotional problems which do not significantly impair the child's interpersonal relationships and ability to function at home or at school. Children at this level are expected to function largely at an age appropriate level educationally, socially, physically, medically, developmentally and emotionally.

Basic duties of Family Foster Homes include but are not limited providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; provide supportive services to assure each child receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents.

**B. Specialized Level of Care** – Basic Care; moderate needs. This level is for children who have mild to moderate needs that require a higher level of care in the home. Children with mild to moderate needs may display developmental delays, episodic problems relating with others, a history of self-abusive behaviors and some aggression towards others. The children may have ongoing needs for mental health treatment, monitoring of school problems and/or special education and medical needs.

Basic duties of Specialized Foster Homes include but are not limited to: providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; and provide supportive services to assure each child receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents.

**C. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care** - Moderate to high care; high needs. Children with moderate to high needs may display significant developmental delays, high impulsivity, ongoing problems with interpersonal relationships including a history of self-abusive behaviors, a risk to self or others including deliberate aggression toward others, inability to maintain control in spite of close supervision, chronic/serious medical condition, and poor/no response to mental health treatment. This level can also include medically fragile children who require a feeding tube, congenital heart disease/abnormalities requiring surgery and monitoring, weekly to monthly

hospital/specialist monitoring, kidney dialysis, severe forms of cancer, and/or severe failure to thrive with long range effects.

Basic duties of Enhanced Specialized Foster Homes include but are not limited to: providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; and provide supportive services to assure each child/youth receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents. The Basic Care/Responsibilities listed below are an expectation of KVC sponsored homes as well as for subcontractors.

**Basic Care/Responsibilities of a Foster Parent:**

- Provide a safe and comfortable environment for children/youth to live to include but not be limited to:
  - Having a separate bed and place for the child/youth's belongings;
  - Abstaining from smoking in the foster home; and,
  - An ethical, moral lifestyle.
- To provide for the child/youth's basic physical and emotional needs equitable to that of any biological or adoptive child/youth in the home.
- To provide for school attendance (transportation), monitor progress, observe special needs and accomplishments; provide aforementioned information to Foster Care Specialist (FCS) and/or Family Permanency Specialist (FPS).
- To provide transportation for youth to medical/dental appointments, mental health appointments, work, family interaction time, family team meetings (when appropriate), court and other activities requested.
- To provide appropriate and adequate clothing.
- To facilitate medical, dental, vision appointments every 6-months or more if necessary; including regular checkups as well as attending to special needs and provide transportation to these appointments.
- To nurture the child/youth to assist with the adjustment process that accompanies removal from his/her home and placement.
- To promote the child/youth in maintaining realistic relationships with his/her family members (to include siblings); to assist in facilitating visitations that will assure positive sibling connections and appropriate interaction with the child/youth's parents to include but not be limited to:
  - Inviting family members to the child/youth's educational and sports activities (if safety is not an issue);
  - Inviting family members to the child/youth's foster home for safe, positive interaction.
- To provide spiritual, cultural, recreational, and enrichment activities that will promote the healthy development of the youth.
- To provide an allowance equal to that of any other children of similar age in the family foster home who receives an allowance. (Monies a child/youth may earn from allowance or employment shall be the child/youth's and not for the provision of needs otherwise provided by reimbursement payments).
- To maintain a record for the youth of his/her time in care through a life-book including, accomplishments, photographs, report cards, etc.

- To provide consistent and realistic discipline and guidance that is age appropriate and does not involve corporal punishment or any form of physical discipline/neglect.
- Ensure that upon departure from foster home the following will be sent along with child/youth;
  - All of child/youth's personal belongings including clothing, earnings and savings;
  - life book;
  - And any item purchased specifically for and given to child/youth during placement.

#### **Child Needs Assessment (CNA) Process**

- A. When a child comes into foster care, a preliminary CNA is completed to determine the child's needs. Within 30 days of placement, another CNA will be completed by the Family Permanency Specialist (FPS) in conjunction with the Foster Parent(s).
- B. The result of the CNA will indicate the child's Level of Care.
- C. Children in all levels of care will be reassessed semi-annually to determine if their Level of Care continues to meet their needs. At any time a Family Permanency\_Specialist, Child Placing Agency or Foster Parent caring for the child may request an\_updated CNA.

#### **Review Process**

- A. Although the foster parent and Child Placing Agency are a part of the review process, they will be notified in writing of the official result of the Child Needs Assessment.
- B. If the Foster Parent/Child Placing Agency of a child disagrees with the Child Needs Assessment result, the Foster Parent/Child Placing Agency must submit a request for a review, in writing, within 10 business days of the date of the notice to the Family Permanency Specialist.

## Attachment F

### DHHS:

For traditional foster parents, the following rates are paid to them based on the child's needs and behaviors on a monthly basis.

<b>FCPAY Rates - Effective July 1, 2010</b>				
<b>Points</b>	<b>0-27</b>			
Age 0-5	\$246			
6-11	\$323			
12+	\$388			
Respite	+\$45			
<b>Points</b>	<b>28-34</b>	<b>35-41</b>		
Age 0-5	\$300	\$356		
6-11	\$378	\$432		
12+	\$444	\$498		
Respite	+\$111			
<b>Points</b>	<b>42-46</b>	<b>47-51</b>	<b>52-56</b>	<b>57-61</b>
Age 0-5	\$411	\$466	\$522	\$576
6-11	\$487	\$543	\$599	\$654
12+	\$554	\$609	\$665	\$721
Respite	+\$176			
<b>Points</b>	<b>62-66</b>	<b>67-71</b>	<b>72-75</b>	<b>76-79</b>
Age 0-5	\$631	\$686	\$742	\$809
6-11	\$709	\$764	\$819	\$885
12+	\$775	\$830	\$885	\$952
Respite	+\$176			
<b>Points</b>	<b>80-83</b>	<b>84-86</b>	<b>87-88</b>	<b>89 or more</b>
Age 0-5	\$885	\$974	\$1,073	\$1,181
6-11	\$963	\$1,050	\$1,151	\$1,259
12+	\$1,029	\$1,117	\$1,216	\$1,324
Respite	+\$176			

For agency supported foster care, DHHS pays the "tiered rate" to the contractor based on the FC pay checklist points for an individual child (see above).

<u>FC Pay Determination</u>	<u>Rate to Agency Supported Foster Care Provider</u>	
0-24 points	\$32.00/day	\$973.44/month
25-49 points	\$43.00/day	\$1308.06/month
50+ points	\$69.00/day	\$2098.98/month

<b>DHHS Agency Supported Foster Care Contractors/monthly</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>Additional Payments</b>
<b>Agency A</b>	\$350.00	\$525.00	\$825.00	If foster parent for more than 5 years gets a bonus of \$25.00 per month
				Emergency FC \$35.00 for 7 days
<b>Agency B</b>	\$571.14	\$638.42	Under Age 12 \$912.60	
			Over Age 12 \$1064.70	
<b>Agency C</b>	\$456.30	\$638.82	\$851.76	for new foster home referral
<b>Agency D</b>	\$365.04	\$669.24	\$943.02	paid respite
<b>Agency E</b>	\$365.04	\$608.40	\$851.76	paid respite, some mileage & training
<b>Agency F</b>	\$365.04	\$669.24	\$943.02	paid respite
<b>Agency G</b>	\$450.00	\$650.00	\$900.00	mileage, retention activities, new F.H. referrals
<b>Agency H</b>	< 6 pts: \$395.46	\$973.44	\$1,216.80	
	6-11 pts: \$456.30	\$1,368.90	\$1,368.90	
	11> pts: \$517.14	most at \$973.44	most at \$973.44	
<b>Agency I</b>	\$389.38	\$522.23	\$839.59	paid respite, gift certificates and passes for F.H.
<b>Agency J</b>	\$365.04	\$669.24	\$912.60	
<b>Agency K</b>	\$350.10	\$500.10	\$ 819.90	Emergency FC \$40.00/day

**KVC and Subcontractors:**

KVC's rate structure is based on three levels of care which are Family, Specialized, and Enhanced.

KVC pays the following rates to their **unlicensed** foster care family directly:

Foster Home Family	\$10.00/day	\$304.20/month
Foster Home Specialized	\$20.00/day	\$608.40/month
Foster Home Enhanced	\$30.00/day	\$912.60/month

KVC pays the following rates to their **licensed** foster care family directly:

Foster Home Family	\$20.00/day	\$608.40/month
Foster Home Specialized	\$30.00/day	\$912.60/month
Foster Home Enhanced	\$40.00/day	\$1216.80/month

KVC pays the following rates to the **sub-contracted** agencies:

Foster Home - Family	\$31.00 Day	\$943.02/month
Foster Home - Specialized	\$50.00 Day	\$1521.00/month
Foster Home – Enhanced	\$69.00 Day	\$2098.98/month

The table below depicts the monthly rates paid directly to foster parents from the sub-contractors affiliated with KVC.

Subcontractors for KVC	Family	Specialized	Enhanced	Other
Agency B	\$517.14	\$638.82	\$912.60	Emergency: \$25.00/day
Agency C	\$456.30	\$760.50	\$973.44	Emergency: \$25.00/day
Agency D	\$365.04	\$669.24	\$943.02	Emergency: \$36.00/day
Agency F	\$365.04	\$669.24	\$943.02	
Agency H	\$395.46- \$517.14 (varies by age)	\$973.44- \$1216.80 (varies by age)	\$973.44	Respite \$25/day
Agency I	\$365.04	\$608.40	\$839.59	Emergency \$14/day
Agency L	\$450.00	\$700.00	\$1,000.00	
Agency M	\$425.88	\$699.96	\$1003.86	
Agency N	\$608.40	\$760.50	\$882.13- \$1034.28 (varies by age)	
Agency O	\$608.40	\$912.60	\$1,216.80	
Agency P	\$456.30	\$760.50	\$912.60	RSAFE Therapeutic FC \$70/day

**Nebraska Families Collaborative (NFC):**

**NFC pays the following rates to relative and child specific foster homes:**  
 NFC uses the FCPay rates developed by the Department to pay relative/child specific foster parents.

The following table depicts the rates paid by NFC to their sub-contracting agencies:

<b>Basic</b>	<b>Per day</b>	<b>Per month (30.42 days/mo.)</b>
Age 0-5	\$ 27	\$ 818
Age 6-12	\$ 32	\$ 965
Age 13-18	\$ 36	\$ 1,079
<b>Minimal</b>		
Age 0-5	\$ 32	\$ 982
Age 6-12	\$ 38	\$ 1,159
Age 13-18	\$ 43	\$ 1,296
<b>Moderate</b>		
Age 0-5	\$ 39	\$ 1,186
Age 6-12	\$ 46	\$ 1,401
Age 13-18	\$ 51	\$ 1,566
<b>Intensive</b>		
Age 0-5	\$ 54	\$ 1,636
Age 6-12	\$ 64	\$ 1,932
Age 13-18	\$ 71	\$ 2,160

Pre-Assessment Rate (first 10 days of placement)	\$38.00	per day	regardless of age
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*Note: Foster parents of children with exceptionally high intensity needs may be paid higher rates using a Special Rate Agreement (SRA).*

**Exceptional Payments:**

Parenting Time/Sibling Visits above and beyond the required four hours=\$15 per hour  
 Maintenance of a Child's School Placement that meets the required distance and documentation=\$10 per day

The following chart depicts NFC subcontractor rates paid directly to foster parents.

	Agency N	Agency C	Agency I	Agency Q	Agency L	Agency H	Agency D	Agency P	Agency B	KVC
<b>Basic</b>										
0-5	\$353.18	\$456.30	\$328.54	\$608.40	\$400.00	\$395.46	\$365.04	\$456.30	\$517.40	\$608.40
6/12	\$418.58	\$456.30	\$389.38	\$608.40	\$400.00	\$456.30	\$365.04	\$456.30	\$517.40	\$608.40
13-18	\$470.90	\$456.30	\$438.05	\$608.40	\$400.00	\$517.40	\$365.04	\$456.30	\$517.40	\$608.40
<b>Minimal</b>										
0-5	\$418.58	\$608.40	\$389.38	\$608.40	\$500.10	\$395.46	\$365.04	\$456.30	\$638.82	\$608.40
6/12	\$497.06	\$608.40	\$462.38	\$608.40	\$500.10	\$395.46	\$669.24	\$456.30	\$638.82	\$608.40
13-18	\$562.47	\$608.40	\$523.22	\$608.40	\$500.10	\$395.46	\$669.24	\$456.30	\$638.82	\$608.40
<b>Moderate</b>										
0-5	\$593.19	\$760.50	\$474.55	\$608.40	\$699.96	\$973.44	\$669.24	\$760.50	\$638.82	\$912.60
6/12	\$699.66	\$760.50	\$559.73	\$608.40	\$699.96	\$973.44	\$669.24	\$760.50	\$638.82	\$912.60
13-18	\$775.71	\$760.50	\$620.57	\$760.50	\$699.96	\$973.44	\$943.02	\$760.50	\$638.82	\$912.60
<b>Intensive</b>										
0-5	\$706.35	\$973.44	\$675.07	\$912.60	\$999.92	\$973.44	\$943.02	\$912.60	\$912.60	\$1216.80
6/12	\$837.16	\$973.44	\$778.76	\$912.60	\$999.92	\$973.44	\$943.02	\$912.60	\$912.60	\$1216.80
13-18	\$928.72	\$973.44	\$863.93	\$912.60	\$999.92	\$973.44	\$943.02	\$912.60	\$912.60	\$1216.80
<b>10 Day</b>	<b>Pre</b>	<b>Assessment Rate</b>								
10 day rate per day	\$16.23	\$20.00	\$15.20	\$20.00	\$20.00	Don't have	\$22.00	\$25.00	\$17.00	Don't have

November 18, 2011

**Question #1: Current compensation guidelines for foster parents; how it is determined, etc.**

KVC has determined foster parent rates by utilizing information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The methodology used was to take the median age of foster child living in a foster home in the Midwest, determine the amount the USDA states it takes to raise a child, and use that as the median for determine base foster parent rates. The median age of a foster child residing in a foster home is 13 and the USDA states the cost is \$11,888 annually. However, due to various programs through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that provides additional financial support outside a daily rate paid, adjustments to the USDA rate has been accounted for. The USDA reports the following are considered when calculating the average cost to raise a child. These amounts have been adjusted accordingly to reflect financial support from other government or KVC programs:

- Housing expenses consist of shelter (mortgage payments, property taxes, or rent; maintenance and repairs; and insurance), utilities (gas, electricity, fuel, cell/telephone, and water), and house furnishings and equipment (furniture, floor coverings, major appliances, and small appliances). **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$3563 annually. However, it is the expectation that anyone interested in becoming a foster parent know and understand that they must have basic shelter for the child. The methodology allows for \$1600 annually towards other housing expenses outlined above.**
- Food expenses consist of food and nonalcoholic beverages purchased at grocery, convenience, and specialty stores; dining at restaurants; and household expenditures on school meals. **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$2488 annually.**
- Transportation expenses consist of the monthly payments on vehicle loans, down payments, gasoline and motor oil, maintenance and repairs, insurance, and public transportation (including airline fares). **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1600 annually.**
- Clothing expenses consist of children's apparel such as diapers, shirts, pants, dresses, and suits; footwear; and clothing services such as dry cleaning, alterations, and repair. **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$825 annually. However, KVC has a contract with the Foster Care Closet to provide brand new clothing to each child in care twice a year. This reduces the amount included in the methodology to \$200 annually.**
- Health care expenses consist of medical and dental services not covered by insurance, prescription drugs and medical supplies not covered by insurance, and health insurance premiums not paid by an employer or other organization. Medical services include those related to physical and mental health. **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1250 annually. However, DHHS provides for 100% of all health care expenses through**

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**Medicaid. This amount was removed from the foster parent rate methodology as a result.**

- Child care and education expenses consist of day care tuition and supplies; baby-sitting; and elementary and high school tuition, books, fees, and supplies. Books, fees, and supplies may be for private or public schools. The average child care and education expenses used in the USDA calculator are based on families who have these expenses. USDA states if you do not have these expenses, expenditures on a child should be adjusted to account for this. **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$1213 annually. Child care is paid for through other DHHS programs. Therefore, \$350 is allowed for supplies.**
- Miscellaneous expenses consist of personal care items (haircuts, toothbrushes, etc.), entertainment (portable media players, sports equipment, televisions, computers, etc.), and reading materials (non-school books, magazines, etc.). **For the median age of 13, this expense is \$950 annually.**

Summary of expenses for base rate annually:

Housing =	\$1600
Food =	\$2488
Transportation =	\$1600
Clothing =	\$ 200 (clothing provided by KVC)
Healthcare =	\$ 0 (paid for by DHHS)
Child Care & Education =	\$ 350 (adjusted due to DHHS daycare stipend)
Miscellaneous =	<u>\$ 950</u>
Total =	\$7188 (base rate for foster parents)

As a result, KVC based rates to subcontractors on the estimation that a minimum of \$20 per day would be paid directly to the foster parent and as the needs of the child increased, the foster parent would be reimbursed at a higher rate. KVC made estimations that subcontractors would reimburse foster families at \$30/day for Specialized and \$40/day for Enhanced Specialized. The rates below are what KVC pays subcontractors allowing for an administrative fee on top of the rate to the foster parents for the subcontractor to support the home. The following are the rates that KVC pays to subcontractors:

- A. Family Level of Care – \$31.00 per day
- B. Specialized Level of Care – \$50.00 per day
- C. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care - \$69.00 per day

At these rates and paying foster parents \$20/day, \$30/day, \$40/day respectively for each type of care, the subcontractor would maintain an administrative fee of 30% for Family Level, 40%

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administrative fee for Specialized, and a 43% administrative fee for Enhanced Specialized level of care. The administrative fee allows for supervision of the home, recruitment, and support.

In instances where it has been determined that children need foster care, KVC strives for the least restrictive setting possible for their care. It is preferred, for example, that children live close to their home community and with relative caregivers whenever possible. Meeting the child's needs by minimizing disruption and trauma while offering appropriate help and service is the goal of Family Permanency Specialists, foster parents and service providers.

All children placed in foster homes will be assigned a Level of Care (LOC) ranging from Family Level of care to Enhanced Specialized Level of Care based on their individual needs reflected in the Child Needs Assessment (CNA).

At KVC Behavioral HealthCare Nebraska, we provide, and subcontract for, four distinct levels of care (LOC), which accommodate families at various levels of training and youth among a spectrum of needs.

The following levels of care designations are used to determine the reimbursement rate to be paid to the foster parent or contracting Child Placing Agency:

**A. Family Level of Care** – Basic care; minimal needs. This level is for children who have minimal needs and require the type of care offered in a Family Foster Home. Children who score at the Family Level of Care may have occasional episodes of behavioral and/or emotional problems which do not significantly impair the child's interpersonal relationships and ability to function at home or at school. Children at this level are expected to function largely at an age appropriate level educationally, socially, physically, medically, developmentally and emotionally.

Basic duties of Family Foster Homes include but are not limited providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; provide supportive services to assure each child receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents.

**B. Specialized Level of Care** – Basic Care; moderate needs. This level is for children who have mild to moderate needs that require a higher level of care in the home. Children with mild to moderate needs may display developmental delays, episodic problems relating with others, a history of self-abusive behaviors and some aggression towards others. The children may have ongoing needs for mental health treatment, monitoring of school problems and/or special education and medical needs.

Basic duties of Specialized Foster Homes include but are not limited to: providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; and provide supportive services to assure each child receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents.

**C. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care** - Moderate to high care; high needs. Children with moderate to high needs may display significant developmental delays, high impulsivity, ongoing

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problems with interpersonal relationships including a history of self-abusive behaviors, a risk to self or others including deliberate aggression toward others, inability to maintain control in spite of close supervision, chronic/serious medical condition, and poor/no response to mental health treatment. This level can also include medically fragile children who require a feeding tube, congenital heart disease/abnormalities requiring surgery and monitoring, weekly to monthly hospital/specialist monitoring, kidney dialysis, severe forms of cancer, and/or severe failure to thrive with long range effects.

Basic duties of Enhanced Specialized Foster Homes include but are not limited to: providing 24-hour care in a safe, nurturing environment; provide food, shelter, clothing, education, medical/dental care, daily care, supervision and transportation; and provide supportive services to assure each child/youth receives sufficient care and supervision to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting and assist in facilitating his/her return to a less structured environment, ideally back with his/her parents. The Basic Care/Responsibilities listed below are an expectation of KVC sponsored homes as well as for subcontractors.

**Basic Care/Responsibilities of a Foster Parent:**

- Provide a safe and comfortable environment for children/youth to live to include but not be limited to:
  - Having a separate bed and place for the child/youth's belongings;
  - Abstaining from smoking in the foster home; and,
  - An ethical, moral lifestyle.
- To provide for the child/youth's basic physical and emotional needs equitable to that of any biological or adoptive child/youth in the home.
- To provide for school attendance (transportation), monitor progress, observe special needs and accomplishments; provide aforementioned information to Foster Care Specialist (FCS) and/or Family Permanency Specialist (FPS).
- To provide transportation for youth to medical/dental appointments, mental health appointments, work, family interaction time, family team meetings (when appropriate), court and other activities requested.
- To provide appropriate and adequate clothing.
- To facilitate medical, dental, vision appointments every 6-months or more if necessary; including regular checkups as well as attending to special needs and provide transportation to these appointments.
- To nurture the child/youth to assist with the adjustment process that accompanies removal from his/her home and placement.
- To promote the child/youth in maintaining realistic relationships with his/her family members (to include siblings); to assist in facilitating visitations that will assure positive sibling connections and appropriate interaction with the child/youth's parents to include but not be limited to:
- Inviting family members to the child/youth's educational and sports activities (if safety is not an issue);
  - Inviting family members to the child/youth's foster home for safe, positive interaction.
- To provide spiritual, cultural, recreational, and enrichment activities that will promote the healthy development of the youth.
- To provide an allowance equal to that of any other children of similar age in the family foster home who receives an allowance. (Monies a child/youth may earn from allowance or employment shall be the child/youth's and not for the provision of needs otherwise provided by reimbursement payments).
- To maintain a record for the youth of his/her time in care through a life-book including, accomplishments, photographs, report cards, etc.

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- To provide consistent and realistic discipline and guidance that is age appropriate and does not involve corporal punishment or any form of physical discipline/neglect.
- Ensure that upon departure from foster home the following will be sent along with child/youth;
  - All of child/youth's personal belongings including clothing, earnings and savings;
  - life book;
  - And any item purchased specifically for and given to child/youth during placement.

**Child Needs Assessment (CNA) Process**

- A. When a child comes into foster care, a preliminary CNA is completed to determine the child's needs. Within 30 days of placement, another CNA will be completed by the Family Permanency Specialist (FPS) in conjunction with the Foster Parent(s).
- B. The result of the CNA will indicate the child's Level of Care.
- C. Children in all levels of care will be reassessed semi-annually to determine if their Level of Care continues to meet their needs. At any time a Family Permanency Specialist, Child Placing Agency or Foster Parent caring for the child may request an updated CNA.

**Reimbursement Rates to KVC Foster Families Sponsored by KVC**

- A. Family Level of Care - \$20.00 per day
- B. Specialized Level of Care - \$30.00 per day
- C. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care - \$40.00

**Reimbursement Rates to Subcontracting Child Placing Agencies**

- D. Family Level of Care – \$31.00 per day
- E. Specialized Level of Care – \$50.00 per day
- F. Enhanced Specialized Level of Care - \$69.00 per day

*\*\*It is important to note that each Subcontracting Child Placing Agency is responsible for setting rates for their foster home. KVC's Child Placing Agency pays directly to foster parents the amount listed above.*

**Review Process**

- A. Although the foster parent and Child Placing Agency are a part of the review process, they will be notified in writing of the official result of the Child Needs Assessment.
- B. If the Foster Parent/Child Placing Agency of a child disagrees with the Child Needs Assessment result, the Foster Parent/Child Placing Agency must submit a request for a review, in writing, within 10 business days of the date of the notice to the Family Permanency Specialist.

**Question #2 - Supervision guidelines for foster parents for example: can foster children participate in car pools (to school, to out of town games, etc.), have babysitters, go to sleep overs, own a car, have a job, go with other parents/kids to movies, etc.**

- Any adult providing care for a state ward for any period of time must have the following background checks completed – APS, CPS, DMV, SOR and local law enforcement. This would apply to anyone transporting the child or providing care (care pools, out of town games, baby sitters, sleep overs, etc.).

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- Regarding date and social activities – (per KVC guidebook): When a youth is in foster care, the foster parents should establish guidelines concerning dating/social outings and privileges; establish an appropriate curfew, and other “house” rules. The birth/adoptive parent(s), FPS, FCS and foster parents should discuss in the first family team meeting to assure everyone’s wishes are respected, approved and unapproved friends, and acceptable activities. It is recommended that a youth’s case plan reflects approval to participate in such activities.
- Regarding employment – (per KVC guidebook): A teenager should be encouraged to work outside the home (when possible and appropriate). Employment allows the youth a greater opportunity to become self-sufficient and it also encourages a higher sense of self-worth by assisting the youth in gaining responsibility, maturity and independence.
- Regarding having a car – youth in foster care can have a car but it would have to be approved by the legal guardian and all team members.

**Question #3 - What are the guidelines for the number of children a foster family can have?:**

- Care provided at any time is limited to no more than nine children under the age of majority, including children related to the foster parent by blood or adoption. No more than 6 of these children may be age 12 or younger.
- For every six children in the home, there must reside at least one adult responsible for the care and supervision.
- Foster parent must have a plan for safe and reliable transportation for the number of children they are licensed for.
- At least 35 square feet per individual excluding bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchen for each child and adult residing in the home is required.
- Bedrooms must have at least 35 square feet for each child occupying the room – foster child or not.
- Considering the strengths and needs of each foster parent is key when determining the number of children each home will be licensed for along with the needs of any youth placed in the home.

**Question #4 - What "rights" do foster parents have in regard to input into the foster child's placement, treatment, providing information to the court?**

**Foster Parent Rights (KVC Guidebook)**

- Foster parents have the right to receive all of the services provided through the program. These services include: preparation of the child through foster parent training,

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support to foster parents while the child is in your home and staff available with a 24-hour on-call system to respond in times of trouble.

- Foster parents have the right to maintain the integrity of their home and may monitor the belongings of the child to insure that they are not harmful or disruptive.
- Foster parents have the right to establish reasonable rules and regulations in their home.
- Foster parents have the right to monitor visitors and guests in their home.
- Foster parents have the right and responsibility to participate in treatment planning for their foster child.
- Foster parents have the right to be compensated in a timely way for the services they provide.
- Foster parents have the right to refuse a placement. If a placement of a foster child seems inappropriate because of the child, family travel or any number of considerations, KVC expects foster parents to be honest and say, "Not at this time." Declining a placement will not jeopardize future placements.
- Other rights of foster parents include being fully informed of the child's background and physical and mental functioning to ensure provision of appropriate care and protection; being involved in the development of a treatment plan for the child placed; participating in child placement reviews and the right to have opinions in placement reviews. The foster parent's opinion is important to the team.

**Question #5 - How many foster parent and what type do you currently have? How many are direct employees of DHHS/KVC/NFC; how many are contracted through subcontractors? Are there plans to expand foster homes; how-subcontract, direct service?**

KVC in Eastern Service Area has 148 licensed homes; KVC in Southeast Service Area has 151 licensed homes. SESA has one foster parent that is employed by DHHS and one that is an employee of KVC.

There are plans to expand foster care throughout the system as part of the ACF Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). KVC has convened the subcontractors to discuss recruitment, retention, and support of foster families. KVC reports to DHHS how this plan is operating in the respective service areas. The plan is to increase the subcontractor's capacity, as well as KVC's. There is a major shortage of foster homes and it will take all entities to develop a robust system to locate enough quality foster parents willing to serve all children of ages and ethnicities.



**How is the current compensation guidelines for foster parents determined?**

Current compensation guidelines to foster parents are determined by each Child Placing Agency. Please note that in Nebraska there has never had standardized guidelines nor cost based system for reimbursement to foster parents. Each agency has always made that determination which may be based on the type of children served, the unique needs of the children served and the specific supports that agency provides to its foster parents.

The NFC subcontracts with: KVC, Lutheran Family Services, Boys Town, Children’s Square, Omni Behavioral Health, Apex, Christian Heritage, Nebraska Children’s Home, and Nova. Once the subcontracted agency receives payment from NFC, they pay the foster parents directly. The subcontractors pay a portion of the funding they receive to the foster parents, and they use the rest of the payment from NFC for administrative costs.

Almost two years ago the NFC developed a Foster Care Focus Group to review payment methodology for compensation to Child Placing Agencies. The Foster Care Focus Group participants included current foster parents, Child Placing Agencies and other stakeholder groups. The group reviewed several other states and private sector methodologies to determine the best course of action. The group agreed to develop its own compensation criteria for Child Placing Agencies serving NFC youth. The rate is determined by the NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation (see below) and the NFC Foster Care Rate Form (also see below) which was also developed by current foster parent, Child Placing Agencies and other stakeholder groups.

The NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation and the NFC Foster Care Rate Form both determine the level of need and the age of each child requiring foster placement. This methodology allows for unique and specific needs of each child to be determined so that they have their individual needs met and so that Child Placing Agencies can be reasonably reimbursed. The reimbursement amount allows for Child Placing Agencies to provide additional supports directly to foster parents so that they may better support foster placements in their foster parents homes.

The NFC has five levels of need that is determined with the foster parents, the agency, family and is based on the needs assessment conducted on each youth requiring foster placement. The following represents the five levels of need listed above and a breakout of each of the percentages of each level for current NFC foster placed youth during the month of October 2011.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
Pre-Assessment	4%	9
Basic	17%	39
Minimal	13%	29
Moderate	19%	43
Intensive	47%	105

The following is the NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation that is utilized with each and every foster placement. The NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation is completed during a team meeting of the Family Permanency Specialist, the Child Placing Agency Foster Care Specialist and the Foster Parent serving the youth. During this process the team reviews specific characteristics of youth and apply the findings to determine the rate utilizing the NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation Form. The following is the Foster Care Rate Evaluation Form that is utilized during the team process.

Occasionally – 1-2 times per month (Frequently) – 1-2 times per week (Habitually) – 3-4 times per week or more

**MENTAL HEALTH/BEHAVIORAL NEEDS**

Behaviors	Examples	Age Appropriate	Minimal	Moderate	Intensive
Runaway	Min: Disappears or runs away occasionally for short periods of time with the intention of returning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Frequently runs away or disappears for longer periods of time requiring encouragement to return.				
	Inten: Runs away for long periods of time (8 or more times per year and 5 or more days at a time), returning only as a result of initiative of others.				
School/Classroom	Min: Occasionally skips classes or exhibits behavior affecting class achievement, requiring make-up and occasional parent/school contact, extra help with homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Frequently truant or exhibits behavior affecting class achievement; creates disturbance in the classroom; requires extra help with schoolwork from parents; frequent contact between parents and school.				
	Inten: Habitually creates disturbance in the classroom or on the school bus; habitually truant; requires daily parent / school contact.				
Drug and Alcohol	Min: Occasionally experiments with alcohol or drugs or both.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Frequently uses alcohol or drugs or both.				
	Inten: Habitually uses alcohol or drugs or both.				
Sexual	Min: Occasionally acts out in a sexual manner; i.e., public sexual gestures or inappropriate sexual language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Frequently acts out in a sexual manner; i.e., public sexual gestures or inappropriate sexual language; disruptive to family and community.				
	Inten: Exhibits sexual deviance; i.e., that of a violent unconsenting nature with others.				
Aggressive	Min: Occasional aggressive behavior toward people; i.e., biting, scratching, throwing objects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Frequent aggressive behavior toward people; i.e., biting, scratching, throwing objects.				
	Inten: Daily aggressive behavior; i.e., biting, scratching, throwing objects.				
Behaviors	Examples	Age Appropriate	Minimal	Moderate	Intensive
Illegal	Min: Occasional problems with stealing, petty theft, vandalism, destroying property.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Occasionally involved in non-violent crimes which result in contact with police / authorities.				
	Inten: Repeated and uncontrollable social behavior resulting in delinquency status; i.e., property offenses, assault, arson.				
Self-Abusive	Min: Frequent self-abusive behavior; i.e., head banging, eye poking, kicking self, biting self, cutting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mod: Recent history of suicide attempts and/or self harm.				
	Inten: Constant self-abusive behavior; i.e., head banging, eye poking, kicking self, biting self, cutting				

Peer Relationships	Mod: Occasional inappropriate behavior with peers; infrequent conflicts with friends, boundary violations, annoying behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	Mod: Frequent enuresis and/or encopresis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: Severe eating disorders, eats inappropriate items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTALS \_\_\_\_\_

2-4 Minimal boxes checked equals an overall **Minimal** category

5 or more Minimal boxes checked or 1 Moderate box checked equals an overall **Moderate** category

2 or more Moderate boxes checked or 1 Intensive box equals an overall **Intensive** category

**Final Mental Health/Behavioral Category:**

Other characteristics which correspond in extent or degree – Specify:

Mental health diagnoses with symptoms of impairment -- Specify:

**PHYSICAL AND PERSONAL CARE NEEDS**

Behaviors	Examples	Age Appropriate	Minimal	Moderate	Intensive
Activities of Daily Living	Min: Needs some help putting on braces or prosthetic devices and help with buttons or laces, but is basically self-caring and able to maintain own physical assisting devices.				
	Mod: Requires help with dressing, bathing, and general toilet needs, including maintenance procedures; i.e., diapering and applying catheters; requires help of a person or a device to walk or get around.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: Non-ambulatory/Daily irrigation/Requires total care or continual monitoring/Requires excessive cleaning / laundry and control of body waste.				
Seizures	Min: Seizures / motor dysfunctions controlled by medication.				
	Mod: Frequent but relatively controlled seizures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: Uncontrollable seizures.				
Therapy	Min: Requires therapy for gross or fine motor skills or other specialized care with frequent implementation by foster parent.				
	Mod: Requires daily administration of medication, preparation of special diets, prescribed physical therapies; i.e., for vision, hearing, speech, gross or fine motor skills, 1 or 2 hours per day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: Requires home administration of daily prescribed exercise routines to improve or maintain gross or fine motor skills.				

Behaviors	Examples	Age Appropriate	Minimal	Moderate	Intensive
Dietary Needs	Min: Requires special diet preparation / supervision.				
	Mod: Minor feeding problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: Exhibits eating, feeding problems; i.e., excessive intake, extreme messiness, extremely slow eating – requires help, supervision, or both.				
Respiratory	Min: Mild controlled asthma or other respiratory problems requiring medication by mouth.				
	Inten: Requires frequent special care to monitor, prevent or remedy serious health/medical conditions; i.e., moderate respiratory problems requiring nebulization and suctioning 2-3 times daily, oxygen while sleeping..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Drug Exposure	Mod: Fetal substance exposure with withdrawal symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIV	Mod: HIV-exposed (18 months or younger)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inten: HIV-infected				

TOTALS \_\_\_\_\_

2-4 Minimal boxes checked equals an overall **Minimal** category

5 or more Minimal boxes checked or 1 Moderate box checked equals an overall **Moderate** category

2 or more Moderate boxes checked or 1 Intensive box checked equals an overall **Intensive** category

**Final Physical and Personal Care Needs Category:**

Other characteristics which correspond in extent or degree – Specify:

Medical Conditions Present:

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**Supplemental Payment**

Mental Health/Behavioral Overall Category \_\_\_\_\_

Physical and Personal Care Overall Category \_\_\_\_\_

**Highest overall category is the final Supplement Payment Level**

*\*\*For example if a child had a Minimal Mental Health/Behavioral Overall Category and a Moderate Physical and Personal Care Overall Category the Final Supplement Payment Level would be Moderate.*

Final supplement Level \_\_\_\_\_

**Exceptional Payment**

Number of hours per month of Parenting Time above the 4 hours per month standard \_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours per month of Sibling Visits above the 4 hours per month standard \_\_\_\_\_

Maintenance of child's school placement (school is located 10 or more miles from foster parent's home) \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Exceptional Pay** \_\_\_\_\_

**RATE/MONTH**

Basic Rate \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Supplemental Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Exceptional Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*First review 10 days after first placement in care if placement directly following intake or 30 days after first placement in care. Subsequent reviews are completed every 60 days and with each placement change thereafter.

**60-Day Review:** If a review indicates no change in Basic, Supplemental, or Exceptional payments, indicate that the above rate continues by signing below. Complete a new form if any rate factors have changed.

Upon completion and findings of the NFC Foster Care Rate Evaluation a compensation amount is determined and agreed upon with the entire team. The following chart depicts the compensation amounts by each level.

<b>Basic</b>	<b>Per day</b>	<b>Per month (30.42 days/mo.)</b>
0-5	\$ 27	\$ 818
6-12	\$ 32	\$ 965
13-18	\$ 36	\$ 1,079
<b>Minimal</b>		
0-5	\$ 32	\$ 982
6-12	\$ 38	\$ 1,159
13-18	\$ 43	\$ 1,296
<b>Moderate</b>		
0-5	\$ 39	\$ 1,186
6-12	\$ 46	\$ 1,401
13-18	\$ 51	\$ 1,566
<b>Intensive</b>		
0-5	\$ 54	\$ 1,636
6-12	\$ 64	\$ 1,932
13-18	\$ 71	\$ 2,160

Pre-Assessment Rate (first 10 days of placement)	\$38.00	per day	regardless of age
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The NFC reimburses directly to the Child Placing Agency, who, in turn, determines their own reimbursement to their foster parents. Each Child Placing Agency has their own specific reimbursement to foster parents.

The chart below depicts the monthly rates paid by each Child Placing Agency directly to their foster parents.

<b>Sub-Contractor/Monthly</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Intensive</b>
	\$400.00	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$1,000.00
		\$365.00	\$669.00	\$943.00
0-5 years of age	\$329.00	\$389.00	\$475.00	\$657.00
6-12 years of age	\$389.00	\$462.00	\$560.00	\$779.00
13-18 years of age	\$438.00	\$523.00	\$621.00	\$864.00
Pre-Assessment	\$462.00			
0-5 year of age	\$353.00	\$420.00	\$593.00	\$706.00
6-12 years of age	\$419.00	\$497.00	\$700.00	\$843.00

13-18 years of age	\$471.00	\$562.00	\$776.00	\$929.00
		\$608.40	\$608.40	\$912.60
	\$395.00	\$973.00	\$1,216.80	\$1,368.90
	\$517.00	\$639.00	6-12 yrs \$639.00	0-12 yrs \$912.60
			13-18 yrs \$912.60	13-18 yrs \$1064.70
	\$304.20	\$304.20	\$760.50	\$912.60
	\$790.92-821.34	\$973.44- 1308.06	\$1186.38- 1551.42	\$1642.68-2159.82

Please note: KVC is a subcontract agency with the NFC and their rates are not included in the table above since they are responding to this same request.

**The expectations of foster parents, including training, transportation, visitation supervision (including if compensation).**

Foster Parent Training

The NFC requires its foster parents to complete the entire PS-MAPP training. This training is required prior to accepting any youth into their home. Permanence and Safety-Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (PS-MAPP) which helps support achieving permanent and safe homes for children in foster care. The benefits of PS-MAPP training includes:

- Helping resource parents build positive relationships with birth parents.
- Supporting resource families' understanding of the commitment necessary to ensure the well-being of children placed in their care.
- Providing resource families with a network of essential services, support and nurturing for children placed in their care.
- Emphasizing the importance of maintaining close connections between children and their birth families.
- Underscoring the benefits of foster care from within the child's own community.
- Providing understanding of behavioral problems the child may experience.
- Helping resource families understand the dynamics of the foster care system.

Youth residing in foster care should be afforded the same opportunities that biological youth receive by their natural parents. The NFC is no exception to this value and work closely with the Child Placing Agencies to ensure they provide the necessary supports and assist with common barriers to their foster parents so that each and every youth has their individual basic needs met. There are instances in which the NFC compensates for circumstances that include:

Parenting Time/Sibling Visits

NFC asks foster parents to provide supervised parenting time and/or sibling visitations for children placed in their home. The foster parents are asked to provide at least four hours each month. By asking foster parents to provide this it allows an opportunity for parents and foster parents an opportunity to work together and support one another. This process also shows the child that the adults are all working together on a shared purpose and outcome which is for the child and family to improve and develop the skills necessary so that the child can return home permanently. Families requiring more than four hours each month the NFC compensates an additional \$15/hour.

### Travel to School

The NFC asks that foster parents transport or develop their own natural supports for foster placements just as they would with their own children. Transportation to school is factored into the standard foster care rate (10 miles of transportation to school, one-way, or 20 miles, round-trip, per day). As with non-wards families provide their own transportation, carpool, networks and bus service for foster youth. It is the intent that youth are placed nearest their school or school district. Foster parents serving youth further than twenty miles from school are allotted an additional \$10/per day per child to compensate for the transportation cost.

### Travel to Home Visits

The rate paid to contractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child. Additional compensation is available for foster parents at the rate of \$15/hour if they provide supervised visitation services in excess of four hours. The NFC also provides transportation through commercial carriers, gas vouchers, and bus passes as needed.

### Food

The NFC rate structure is based on the USDA costs of raising a child excluding health care and child care costs as documented in the USDA's "Expenditures on Children by Families, 2008" (the most recent version available at the time of rate structure development). The rate paid to contractors includes these costs plus the estimated agency costs associated with each child.

### Child Care

The NFC does not compensate for child care. Payments for planned respite are provided to foster parents and crisis respite is available as needed.

### School Supplies and Personal Incidentals

The cost of school supplies is factored into the rate paid to Child Placing Agencies. The NFC works with local community agencies and the Foster Care Closet to ensure that youth have the necessary school supplies. The Child Placing Agencies also offer new and used clothing, underwear and diapers, socks and shoes, book bags, pencils, erasers, deodorant, seasonal needs and many other items.

### Extra-Curricular and Other Activities

The NFC encourages Child Placing Agencies to ensure they provide the proper balance of their foster parents so that they balance risk and child safety while promoting normalcy in each child's life. There are many activities that contribute to a child's opportunity to develop social skills, interact with others, and be part of typical childhood activities. Foster youth are encouraged to participate in activities such as sports, Extra-curricular activities, band, employment, and others that other children participate. The individual treatment needs, developmental level, level of care, benefits, and possible concerns of participation when deciding if a child should or should not participate in typical childhood activity.

**Supervisions guidelines for foster parents for example: can foster children participate in car pools (to school, to out of town games, etc.), have babysitters, go to sleep overs, own a car, have a job, go with other parents/kids to movies, etc.**

Please refer to response above under section titled Extra-Curricular and Other Activities.

## What are the guidelines for the number of children a foster family can have?

The guidelines for the number of children a foster family can serve is determined by licensing standards. Please refer to the state of Nebraska Chapter 6, Licensing Foster Homes, Group Homes, Child Caring Agencies, and Child Placing Agencies Manual 474 NAC 6-003.

[www.sos.state.ne.us/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Health\\_and\\_Human\\_Services\\_System/Title-474/Chapter-6.pdf](http://www.sos.state.ne.us/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Health_and_Human_Services_System/Title-474/Chapter-6.pdf)

Parents and Child Placing Agencies work closely with the NFC to determine (based on their licensing standards) the actual number of youth they are able to serve in their homes. This is based on skill-set of foster parents, needs of the child and other youth placed within their home and suitability.

In addition to licensing standards each Child Placing Agency works with their foster parents to determine appropriateness and suitability of the child referred. The Child Placing Agency is familiar with each child placed in their agency and within each foster home. Safety and risk are the single most important aspect when determining which home is most suitable. Foster parents also provide significant input during the suitability planning process.

## What "rights" do foster parents have in regard to input into the foster child's placement, treatment, providing information to the court?

The NFC maintains a **Standard Responsibility Statement (SRS)** that is provided to each foster parent at the time of placement. The SRS defines the following: **foster parent rights**; responsibilities to Foster Children; responsibilities for birth parents; responsibilities to biological children and own birth family; and responsibilities to the agency.

These rights include:

1. Foster parents have the right to confidential information about the child and the child's previous history.
2. Foster parents have the right to full knowledge about any previous behavior that could be detrimental to the child's health/safety or the safety of others. The exception to this is information regarding HIV and AIDS testing.
3. Foster parents have the right to make decisions regarding which child or children they want in their home.
4. Foster parents have the right to participation as a team member with decision making power in the child's treatment plan.
5. Foster parents have the right to a fair and impartial assessment of their home and personal skills related to the task of foster parenting.
6. Foster parents have the right to be sponsored through an agency of their choosing.
7. Foster parents have the right to ask for the removal of a child from their home whose needs and/or behaviors are not a suitable match. Foster parent should submit a request for removal to their child placing agency staff. If the child has been in placement less than 6 months, the notice the foster parent gives may vary depending on the contracting agency for the child. If the child has been in placement 6 months or longer, the foster parent is to give 30 day notice. If the foster home is related to the child placed, the foster parent is to give 30 day notice regardless of the length of the placement. Exceptions may be made if the child presents a danger to him/herself or others.
8. Foster parents have the right to receive notice of a child being moved from their home. If the child has been in placement less than 6 months, the notice the foster parent receives may vary depending on the contracting agency for the child. If the child has been in placement 6 months or

longer, the foster parent is to receive 30 day notice. If the foster home is related to the child placed, the foster parent is to receive 30 day notice regardless of the length of the placement. Foster parents may waive the length of time. This waiver must be in written format with the signature of the foster parent. A child may also be moved with less notice if ordered or approved by the court, the move is to a selected pre-adoptive family, or if the child is in danger in the foster home.

9. Foster parents have the right to training, instruction concerning agency policy and procedure, respite care, consultation, supervision by a professionally trained person in the field of foster care, and additional support in times of crisis.
10. Foster parents have the right to know Childrens' Square rates and to receive compensation for room, board, and personal investment of time and energy.

Foster parents have the right to have their **grievances** heard and to be addressed in a timely manner as do all employees, NFC Provider Network, families, youth and stakeholders. Every person involved with the NFC has the right to file a complaint or grievance related to any aspect of dissatisfaction. The NFC responds to complaints and grievances within one business day and resolve the complaint within 30 days after the date of the received complaint if feasible. The person/agency is notified of the final resolution the same way in which the grievance was filed. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome anyone can request reconsideration or file an appeal with the NFC Executive Director. A complaint/grievance includes, but is not limited to: Youth and Family Rights; Quality Care and Outcomes; Manner of Service; Accessibility; Billing and Funding; Professionalism; Employee or personnel dissatisfaction and other.

The Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) and Network Administration Department determine the level of incident and complete a quarterly summary report. The NFC Leadership will review the pattern of Grievances/Complaints/Compliments quarterly. All incidents that are determined a Level 3 are reviewed quarterly with the NFC board.

**Leveling Definitions:**

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 0
Minor policy or practice violation(s).  1. No injury (psychological, physical) to youth or staff occurred  or  2. No legal or ethical transgressions occurred.	Moderate policy or practice violation(s) or a substantial number of minor violations or repeat of previous violations.  1. Minor injury (psychological, physical) to child  or  2. Minor legal or minor ethical transgressions occurred.	Major policy or practice violation(s).  1. Sentinel event  or  2. Practices so pervasive that if continued, prudent judgment would conclude that child or staff injury would occur.	No violation noted during investigation or report determined to be false or situation posed no danger or concern

In addition, each Child Placement Agency has their own foster care policies surrounding Rights and Responsibilities.

**How many foster parents and what type do you currently have? How many are direct employees of DHHS/KVC/NFC; how many are contracted through subcontractors? Are there plans to expand foster homes; how-subcontract, direct service?**

The NFC is not a Child Placing Agency, therefore, has no foster parents. The NFC works directly with the other Child Placing Agencies and utilizes their network of foster parents. There are a total of 612 licensed foster homes between all the Child Placing Agencies subcontracting with the NFC.

As part of the Department's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) with ACF there is a regional recruitment and retention plan that is currently being revised in partnership with the Department, the Lead Agencies and other Child Placing Agencies. There are plans to expand foster homes and the

NFC is currently in process of moving toward Performance Based Contracting and is expected to be implemented in January 2012. Specific measures in draft format pending agreement by Child Placing Agencies includes: Licensure of Child Specific/Relative Foster Home; Successful Reunification; Permanency to Adoption and Guardianship; Recruitment and Licensing of Foster Homes and Timeliness to Adoptions and Recruitment.